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Cultural Norms in Translating Children's Literature

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Abstract

The reader of a translated text is particularly important when the translation is intended for a young audience. The translation must take into account the cultural knowledge of the intended reader. This research looks at the relationships between the translator, the author, and the intended and accidental readers of the source text. It discusses the issue of the low status of children's books, and translated children's literature in the literary polysystem. It focuses on the resulted disagreement among translators on the appropriate translational procedure to be followed when translating works with culture specific references (foreignization vs. domestication). It is an attempt to draw the attention to the cultural norms which govern the translation of children's literature from English into Arabic. The research also examines 'adaptation' as the most common translational procedure used in translating children's works with culture specific items and references. Examples are taken from two works of children's literature: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Tom Sawyer*. The examples reveal incidents of adaptation by means of deletion, replacement and addition.

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CULTURAL NORMS IN TRANSLATING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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of the College of Languages and Translation
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Dr. Mongi Raddadi, Advisor

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This thesis entitled:

CULTURAL NORMS IN TRANSLATING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above-mentioned discipline.

Abstract

The reader of a translated text is particularly important when the translation is intended for a young audience. The translation must take into account the cultural knowledge of the intended reader. This research looks at the relationships between the translator, the author, and the intended and accidental readers of the source text. It discusses the issue of the low status of children's books, and translated children's literature in the literary polysystem. It focuses on the resulted disagreement among translators on the appropriate translational procedure to be followed when translating works with culturally specific references (foreignization vs. domestication). It is an attempt to draw the attention to the cultural norms which govern the translation of children's literature from English into Arabic. The research also examines 'adaptation' as the most common translational procedure used in translating children's works with culturally specific items and references. Examples are taken from two works of children's literature: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Tom Sawyer*. The examples reveal incidents of adaptation by means of deletion, replacement and addition.

المستخلص:

تزداد أهمية قارئ النص المترجم بشكل خاص إذا ما كانت هذه الترجمة موجهة لجمهور من صغار السن. فمن الواجب الأخذ بعين الاعتبار خلفية قارئ النص الثقافية. ينظر هذا البحث في العلاقات بين المترجم والمؤلف والقارئ المقصود بالنص الأصلي والقارئ العارض. كما يناقش قضية المكانة المتواضعة التي تحتلها كتب الأطفال وأدب الطفل المترجم في المنظومة الأدبية، والخلاف الناتج عن ذلك بين المترجمين حول الطريقة المثلى لترجمة النصوص المحتوية على إشارات ثقافية (تغريب النص أم توطينه). وهذا البحث محاولة لتسليط الضوء على الأنماط الثقافية التي تحكم ترجمة أدب الأطفال من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية. كما يدرس أيضا طريقة "التكييف" باعتبارها أكثر الطرق شيوعا عند ترجمة النصوص المحتوية على دلالات وإشارات ثقافية، وقد تم اختيار أمثلة على ذلك من عمليين أدبيين للأطفال: أليس في بلاد العجائب و توم سوير. وتظهر هذه الأمثلة طريقة "التكييف" باستخدام وسائل مختلفة كالحذف والإحلال والإضافة.

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Introduction:

Translated Children's Literature is a new field of research called Children's Literature Translation Studies. It is situated at the intersection of two academic disciplines: Translation Studies and Children's Literature.

The inability to define children's literature, and the lack of agreement among scholars on both the concept and the name, make it necessary to define what is referred to as children's literature throughout this research. We can define children's literature as Townsend did: "Children's literature could only be regarded as consisting of those books which by a consensus of adults and children were assigned to the children's shelves" (19, 20). We can also see children's literature from the point of view of Nodlemen: "Children's fiction is in fact a distinct kind of fiction, a kind that we recognize even when we cannot put our fingers on what is special about it because it describes a particular version of reality in a particular way" (184).

Questions about the concept of children's literature have been asked in countless variations by scholars attempting to define it: Is there such a thing as children's literature? Is a children's book a book written by children or for children? Is a book written for children still a children's book if it is (only) read by adults? What about adults' books read also by children- are they children's literature? (O'Sullivan 13). O'Connell says that "one of the primary difficulties in defining what is meant by 'children's literature' is the enormously inclusive scope and potentially vague nature of the semantic fields covered by the concepts referred to using the nouns 'children' and 'literature' " (16). Travers, on the other hand, believes that there is no difference between children's literature and adults' literature. She

says that her books have nothing to do with the label of 'children's literature' which suggests that this is something different from literature in general, something that pens off both child and author from the main stream of writing.

There is also no consensus on what to name this concept. Some scholars- like Townsend, C.S. Lewis, O'Connell, Hunt and many others- call it "Children's Literature", and this is what it is called in this research. Others prefer to call it "children's books" like Sendak, Michel Tournier, and O'Sullivan, while it is called "Childhood Literature" by scholars like Golden. The reason of such inconsistency according to Shavit is that " in the western world at least, the concept of childhood is itself a new one dating back to the period of enlightenment." (134).

Before there could be any talk about children's books and literature, childhood had first to be recognized as a distinctive stage in human life, with its special needs. Once acknowledged, those needs materialized in such institutions as schools which in turn, created yet other needs: books written specifically for children to educate and entertain them. These were to be written by national authors in the children's mother tongue or translated from other lands, languages, and literatures. It was in this way that books of different genres and forms crossed geographical boundaries and cultural and linguistic barriers to become available for children in their mother tongues. Translation also broadened the scope of publications and research on children's literature.

One of the pioneers of the subject is Gote Klingberg. In his book *Children's Fiction in the Hands of the Translators* (1986), Klingberg argues that children's literature translation is a specific kind of translation, which has to consider cognitive and linguistic abilities of its

recipient – the child. He suggests a definition of the problems a translator encounters and what recommendations can be made. He also discusses the reception and influence of translation on the target language.

O’Sullivan in her book *Comparative Children’s Literature* that around the time Klingberg was writing, Katharina Reiss (1982) looked seriously at the subject and attempted to identify specific problems of the translation of children’s literature in the context of her typology of texts. She named three factors to justify the need for a special kind of study. These were: (1) adults translating works written by adults for children; (2) the pressure exerted on the translator to observe taboos or follow educational principle; and (3) children’s limited knowledge of the world (76).

Zohar Shavit (1981) shows how decisions made in the translation are determined by the position of children’s books in the literary polysystem¹. Because of the marginal situation of texts for children, translators can be very free with them, adapting them to models already present in the target system (172). Even-Zohar (1978) maintains that there is no awareness of the existence of translated children’s literature as an independent system within the polysystem and that the prevailing concept is that translated literature is treated on individual grounds as a “foreign literature” (117-127).

In her dissertation on the translation of children’s literature, Riitta Oittinen (1993-2000) speaks of ‘translating for children’ not of the ‘translation of children’s literature’. She

1. Described in Even-Zohar’s terms: “A ‘polysystem’ is inherently multidimensional. It is able to accommodate taxonomies established in the realm of literature (the division between high and low literature), translation (the division between translation and non translation), and other modes of cultural production, as well as the realm of social relations (the division between dominant and dominated social groups). The need to account for the relations between these two realms, to describe translation not as a phenomenon existing in isolation, but as an integral part of a sociocultural totality, leads polysystem model to the supposition of norms and laws of translation production” (287).

focuses exclusively on the child reader. She suggests that if the “I” of the reader of the translation meets the “you” of the translator and the author, it is a good translation. She believes that if the readers enjoy and accept the translation, the translator has fulfilled his loyalty to the author of the source text (95).

The range of theoretical issues has expanded to include areas as readability (Puurtinen 1994), tense and translation (Lathey 2003), ideological factors (Thomson-Wohlgermuth 2003), censorship in translation (Craig 2001), and the interaction of image and text in the translation of picture books (O’Sullivan 1999). However, one cannot help noticing the clear shortage in research done to view translated children’s literature from a cultural angle that bridges the gap between two completely different cultures such as English and Arabic.

From the previous review of literature, we can see that there is a lack of research on the problems faced by Arab translators when translating English children’s books. Such problems might be posed by many factors, the most prominent of which is the wide cultural gap between Arabic and English cultures. This research is an attempt to draw the attention to the cultural norms which govern the translation of children’s literature from English into Arabic. It is an effort to examine the application of translational methods already used in previous studies to the translation of children’s literature into Arabic. In addition to observing the way Arab translators have dealt with text-specific problems like cultural-specific references. The subject of the research has been chosen due to:

1. The importance of children's literature that rises from the significance of childhood as a distinctive and unique stage in human's life with its special needs that ought to be considered.
2. Children's literature tends to occupy a marginal position in the literary system. There is a little awareness on the part of many translators, and perhaps some writers of children's literature, that children's literature constitutes a system within the polysystem (Even-Zohar 117). This fact and the idea that children's literature is self-explanatory could be the reasons behind the absence of criticism of children's literature.
3. The value of translating for children, and its role in: (a) exploring other cultures and getting to know other peoples and civilizations. Not only is it part of the child's curiosity that needs to be satisfied in one way or another, but also a healthy way of broadening the child's horizons. It enhances children's tolerance and understanding of the lives of other children and people in other countries in a world made smaller by communications. (b) Correcting wrong impressions and prejudices children may have about a culture or a country, and may hence be used as an instrument in the promotion of cross-cultural knowledge and studies. (c) Giving children access to the best foreign authors. (d) Educating children by enriching and improving the child's acquisition of language and knowledge through adding new words and information in each story the child reads.
4. The existence of, and interest in, text-specific challenges that books for children pose to translators due to cultural references. Although these challenges are not found only in children's literature; the age-specific addressees of children's literature either as implied or

real readers, and their limited experience of the world add to the difficulties translators face when translating such texts.

The research also examines 'adaptation' as the most common translational procedure used in translating children's works with culture specific items and references. Adaptation aims at adjusting the original text to the requirements and cultural values of the target language by means of: deletion (abridgment), replacement, or addition. Although adaptation is not exclusively used in translating children's literature, but adult's literature too; there are more factors need to be considered when translating children's literature. Among these factors: the pressure exerted on the translator to observe taboos or follow educational principles, and children's limited knowledge of the world. For example, what is to be deleted from a translation directed to children because it shows a negative attitude towards school, or disrespect for family members is to be retained if the translation aims at adults. Furthermore, the research sheds light on the debate taking place between advocates of domesticating translation and those of foreignizing it within the framework of the polysystem theory.

I. Methodology:

The methodology followed in this research consists of an evaluative study of two works of children's literature: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Tom Sawyer*. The evaluation is carried out by comparing each of the literary works with one or more of their Arabic translations in order to find out: (1) incidents of adaptation as a translational procedure used to deal with cultural-specific references; (2) means of adjustment used in every example (namely: deletion, replacement, addition), and to classify them according to the grounds on which translators made their choices; And (3) whether or not they were successful in making such choices.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and *Tom Sawyer* are two of the most famous and popular classics in children's literature. They have been selected according to age. The former is directed to younger children of eight to twelve, and the latter is for older children of twelve to sixteen. As may be noticed, focus is placed on fantasy and adventure as genre and on narrative prose as form. Two reasons may account for this: (a) fantasy and adventure seem to be the most commonly translated genres into Arabic, in addition to fables. This is perhaps because fantasy is an attractive topic for children. It is a manifestation of their imaginative and magical world where they can step over the edge of the possible. Fantasy is also attractive for translators. It, as Lynn says, "often contains the most serious underlying themes. Such themes as the conflict between good and evil, the struggle to preserve joy and hope in a cruel and frightening world have led some critics to suggest that fantasies may portray a truer version of reality than many of most realistic novels" (xxi). As for adventure, it depicts a child who becomes involved in a situation where he needs to tackle a difficult problem, solve

a mystery, or undertake a journey without the presence of parents or authority (Marshall 158). It satisfies the child's desire to explore the world. (b) Narrative prose is the most commonly translated form into Arabic.

The research is divided into an introduction, body, and a conclusion. The introduction deals in general terms with the aim and organization of the work along with a review of some theoretical contributions to the subject. The conclusion will sum up the findings of this research. The body consists of the discussion of the subject.

I. Cultural Norms in Translating Children's Literature:

A. What is culture:

According to Brewer, the term “culture” is used to refer to “the complex collection of experiences which condition daily life. It includes the history, the social structures, the religion, the traditional customs and usages of people. It further includes the complicated interrelationships between the various social classes, the races and the religious groups which exist in juxtaposition with one another in any given society” (22). This is the definition of culture that is the focus of the discussion on cultural norms in the following pages. However, we should not forget the fact that culture is an important part of language and, hence, translation. And as Gazala says: “we should understand that culture is a huge problem of translation, yet it is translatable, however difficult and inconsistent that might be” (149). Gazala provides the definition of culture offered by Newmark: “I define culture as the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression” (194).

B. Translation and culture:

Translation theories and translation theorists frequently recommend that for each source language (SL) cultural item the translator should find an equivalent in the target language (TL) culture – if the translation is to have the same effect, both linguistically and culturally, on the target reader as the source text had on the reader of the source language.

Cristina Sousa, in her article *Assessing Receptivity When Translating Children's Literature*, talks about the Reception Theory. She says that it has directed our attention to a

new entity: the implied reader, the person the author addresses in his work, explicitly or implicitly, and who presumably shares the author's knowledge. Contrastingly, the real reader- the person who actually performs the act of reading- in fact may or may not be the writer's intended reader. He may be simply an accidental reader, someone who reads the book but who is not part of the intended audience, and may not share the author's knowledge (17).

As we all know, enjoyment, although difficult- if not impossible- to measure, could be considered the driving force of reading fiction as a whole. To enjoy reading is to find pleasure and satisfaction in experiencing it. Pleasure and satisfaction, however, depend on some factors. Among these factors are: the fluency with which the fiction is written, the characters that play parts in it, the plot they are involved in, and the resulting suspense, humor, etc. But if the reader does not possess the ideal background knowledge which will allow him to identify the text's social and historical norms, the level of enjoyment is bound to be diminished. In other words, enjoyment of fiction is directly affected if the reader is not the author's "implied reader" but rather an "accidental reader". Sousa explains that by saying: "Consequently, the TL reader may not experience as high a level of satisfaction as the SL reader, as he is less likely to possess the background knowledge required to take on board all the elements at play in the translated text and would therefore be at loss" (22).

But what can translators do in order to solve this problem, the problem of different background knowledge between the implied reader - the source text reader- and the accidental reader -the target text reader- resulting from cultural differences between the two? It is a fact, according to Sousa, that the translator creates the TT, in the same way that the author creates the ST. Like the author, he creates it for an intended readership: the TL

readers. In the process of translation, the translator has to make many conscious decisions. Among them are the questions of: how to translate specific expressions? How to convey certain meanings? How to bridge the implied author's intentions through? How to use the most appropriate style and the appropriate register? He does all this with both the ST and the TL readers in mind (18). Or as Anthea Bell puts it "we [translators] must be free where necessary, but not excessively free; we owe a double duty, to the author of the source text, and to the readers of the book in the target language" (66).

In a paper she presented in an international conference about children's literature in translation, Steffensen says: "It is the translator who creates the target text in such a way that it can be understood in the target culture in a language with conventions, codes, and references that differ from those of the original text" (16). She believes that the translator does not produce a completely new message, but he sends the writer's message to a new receiver in different circumstances from those of the original receiver. How the translators choose to resolve this task will partly depend on their reading and understanding of the original text, and partly the expectations that they have of the future readers and their reading competence. Steffensen explains this saying that there will be a range of competences inscribed in the implied reader that the reader is expected to possess or be in a position to decode and acquire during the reading. The implied reader of the target text will have different competences and premises from the implied readers of the source text. And when it comes to translation, she says, much will depend on the cultural premises they themselves bring to the respective text before they as translators recreate them in the target text for a target group. (16). In other words, and as Umberto Eco puts it, "it is a process of negotiation

between author and text, between author and readers, as well as between the structure of two languages and the encyclopedias of two cultures.” (qtd. in O’Connell 60).

As for translating children’s literature, it has to be observed that children’s literature is subject to different kinds of often justified censorship. Their translations have been treated with a great liberty. This happens, according to Fornalczyk, “either on pedagogical grounds, children’s assumed incapability of understanding, or, according to Shavit’s Polysystem Theory, due to the peripheral position of children’s literature within the literary polysystem.” (94, 95). In other words, the translator is permitted to manipulate the text in various ways by changing, enlarging, or abridging it or by deleting or adding to it. (O’Connell 26). This means that “the lower the status of a text the more freely it is treated” (O’Sullivan 98).

C. Adaptation (Foreignization vs. Domestication):

One need not to be an expert on translated children’s literature to notice the widespread phenomenon of adaptation. Lewanska provides the following definition of adaptation, “a literary revision aimed at adjustment of the original to the requirement of the new consumer, or to other requirements than those of the original presentation media” (90). Klingberg calls this translational procedure “cultural context adaptation” (11). He states that “the source language cultural specific is replaced by the target language specific, and the text is brought to conform to the cultural values of the target language. This is achieved either by deleting and changing a set of source language values, or by adding other values deemed appropriate for the target language readers” (11). He adds: “A problem when children’s fiction is translated is that some elements of cultural context obviously are not known to the same extent to the readers of the target text as to the readers of the source text” (11). He

recommends that the translator should do something about it “in order to retain the degree of adaptation” and “to facilitate understanding or to make the text more interesting than what otherwise be the case” (12).

Klingberg regards all the cultural and language specific references that might occur as one of the main sources for ‘deviation’ from the original text in translation. By ‘references’ he means allusions of various cultural phenomena that do not exist in the translator’s own culture such as plants and animals’ peculiar to a certain landscape, mentions of mythology, history and politics, consumer goods, literary allusions, quotations, etc. He discusses whether all references to elements foreign to the target public should be replaced by something familiar to its own culture, or should be preserved. He also asks: how much explanation does the reader of the target text need? What kind of explanation? Are they Explanatory additions to the text or metalinguistic explanations in paratexts (such as footnotes, forewords, glossaries)? (O’Sullivan 93).

O’Sullivan refers to these two strategies as “domesticating translations” in which cultural-specific foreign elements are adapted to make them those of the target culture, and “foreignizing translations” which preserves the foreignness of the source text. According to him many translations contain a combination of the various strategies (98).

The two strategies are interpreted by Hermans in terms of the relationship between target text and source text along two poles of continuum: adequacy vs. acceptability. A translation is termed “adequate” when the translator makes an attempt to follow source rather than target linguistic and literary norms. On the other hand, a translation is termed “acceptable” when the translator has adhered to those norms of the target system. (qtd. in

Fernandes 49,50). “Adequacy” may be viewed as parallel but not equivalent to, Nida’s “formal equivalence” and Newmark’s “semantic equivalence”, while “acceptability” may be seen as parallel but not equivalent to, Nida’s “dynamic equivalence”, and Newmark’s “communicative equivalence”. They are not equivalences because “formal and dynamic equivalence,” on the one hand, and “semantic and communicative equivalence,” on the other, are concepts which determine whether or not equivalence is obtained between original and translation, whereas “adequacy” and “acceptability” take it for granted that equivalence is obtained between the ST and TT. What they propose to examine is what type (and/or what degree) of equivalence holding between the original and the translation (Toury59).

Some translators believe in domestication, and adhere to it as the best strategy to deal with the problem of cultural-specific texts. The child reader, as Aidan Chambers points out in his article “The Reader in the Book”, cannot adapt himself to each text he comes into contact with. “Children [...] have not discovered how to shift the gears of their personality according to the invitation offered by the book to suit them, tending to expect an author to take them as he finds them rather than they take the book as they find it” (qtd. in Sousa 17). Fawcett holds that translators are required to assume a cultural stance towards translation. That is, they should adopt a cultural-biased approach in translation. They are required to make culture familiar to readers by means of changing the source language culture into the target language culture in translation. (Ghazala 194).

Anthea Bell adjusts foreign elements to the age of the recipient, believing that an older reader will cope with them better than a younger child, “the idea [...] is to avoid putting young readers off by presenting them with an impenetrable-looking set of foreign names the

moment they open the book” (qtd. in O’Sullivan 97). Bell confesses that she is an adherent of the school of ‘invisibility of translation’, or domestication. She says, “in the modern debate over the merits of ‘visible’ and ‘invisible’ translation I am unrepentant, unreconstructed adherent of the school of invisibility, and cannot change an honestly held opinion because it is out of fashion” (58,59). She goes on that she hopes the translation will read as easily, and be as appealing to the reader as if it had been written originally in the target language. (ibid 60).

Riitta Oittinen calls domestication loyalty to the future readers of the translation. “If we think of translation in terms of the target language audiences”, she says, “and ask the crucial question, for whom? We cannot keep to the equivalence (in the sense of sameness) as our guiding principle. Rather we have to ask is this translation successful for this purpose?” she adds that the scopos of translation are different from those of the original, because the readers of the texts, the original and the translation, are different: “they belong to different cultures, they speak different languages, and they read in different ways. Their situations are different” (12).

On the other hand, foreignization, which is the new trend in translating texts with culturally specific references, has its own advocates. Translators at the beginning of the 20th century approached the text with greater liberty than their successors at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. This means: the more independent position of children’s literature within the literary system, and the more respect and trust towards the child reader, the more cultural translation studies diminish the role of cultural context adaptation (Fornalczyk 99).

Contemporary children’s literature is more tolerant. The early foreign language

learning in schools as well as the general practice of showing TV programmes and films in the original language with subtitles contribute to an easier and early acceptance of foreign-sounding names and elements in literature (O'Sullivan 98).

Astrid Lindgren attacks the assumption that children, with their limited experience, are incapable of accepting places in literature, or identifying with foreign people. She says that she is sure that children have 'an extraordinary ability' to adapt, that they are able to experience the most unusual things and situations. Her translator into Arabic, Walif Saif, says that a child reader will not feel alienated as s/he encounters foreign elements in literature even if all these are not part of his/her own socio-cultural environment. (qtd. in O'Sullivan 94).

The ability of child readers either to accept foreign elements or not to notice them at all in their reception of texts was also observed by Rhoda Bunbury and Reinbert Tabbert. They carried out a small-scale study of the different reception of Randolph Stow's novel *Midnite* and its German translation by Australian and German readers. While the novel enjoyed specifically Australian features, in Germany they either went entirely unnoticed or were not considered important. (qtd. in O'Sullivan 95).

O'Sullivan states the fact that something culturally alien may not be really perceived as a stumbling-block, and can be interpreted in various ways. Children take little notice of an author's name and do not relate to macrocontextual data. She says: "In the process of learning to read, young readers can develop strategies that help them to cope with such things. They skip something that is incomprehensible to them or refuse to allow minor disruptions to interrupt the flow of reading" (95). In principle, children read texts from foreign contexts in

just the same way as texts from their own cultures. O'Sullivan adds: "Young readers -like many adult readers- absorb and identify with what they read and tend to concentrate on such anthropological universals [...], that is to say on common factors rather than differences in literature" (95).

Advocates of foreignization believe that domesticating translation, or what Klingberg calls 'cultural context adaptation', implies a contradiction. On the one hand, the goal of translation seeks to promote understanding by attempting to bring two cultures closer together. On the other hand, adapting a cultural element to the context of the target language often defeats this purpose. Promoting understanding through translation can come about only if the way of life of a given people, and their cultural, social and political norms are transferred into the target language and literature faithfully without forcing any change into them.

In her article, Ana Fornalaczyk states Akiko Yamazaki's opinion about this topic. Yamazaki argues that replacing foreign elements with more familiar ones not only shows "lack of respect towards other cultures", but also "deprives child readers of the chance to realize the wealth of cultural diversity that surrounds them". She decidedly opposes the idea of 'cultural context adaptation'. She believes that any such adaptation falsifies the original and "creates a false impression of a homogeneous world". Moreover, it discourages children from the foreign and makes them unaware of entering a different system (a book which originated in a different culture and language, and which may require a different mode of reading). She also believes that it deprives them of "the perspective into another culture" (qtd. in Fornalaczyk 96). Bearing the same idea in mind, Fornalaczyk points out that if one of the

translation functions is building bridges between cultures, it seems essential that translations retain as much original flavor as possible, and help familiarize the young reader with foreign culture. (99).

If this is the case, cultural elements, though alien to the reader of the target language, ought not to be changed or tampered with during the act of translation. One needs to know the other culture to understand it. Knowledge of the other culture can only come through familiarizing oneself with its traditions and way of life.

Moreover, the tremendous advances in telecommunications, printing and other forms of mass media have brought the world closer together, and made it larger culturally speaking. People from different cultures not only know a great deal about each other but appreciate the differences which exist between their respective cultures.

To illustrate this point, a few examples from children's literature are required. The first two examples are provided by Bravo-Villasante. They concern the translation of *Robinson Crusoe* which was adapted to Spanish conditions. "[...] the Protestant moral was suppressed because the translator, the well-known storyteller Iriatre, was Catholic." (47). In translation of *Alice in Wonderland*, Bravo-Villasante tells us that 'tea and biscuits' which Alice has is changed into 'chocolate con picatostes'. The reason is that "in earlier times, before it became fashionable to drink tea in the English manner, tea was only given to sick people in Spain." (48). While changing the English tradition of 'tea and biscuit' into 'chocolate con picatostes' may be seen as good attempt to bring the text closer to the reader, it leaves out an important cultural feature of the English that will be lost to the Spanish young readers.

There is no way out of the controversy. The choice of one method over the other depends largely on the translator. One translator may adhere to the school of the “invisibility of translation” or “domestication”, and another may follow the school of the “visibility of translation” or “foreignization”. A third translator may prefer a way between the two, and use a combination of these strategies in his translation, in other words “neutralization of translation”. In her essay *walking the tightrope of Illusion*, Anthea Bell talks about a seminar in Oxford in the spring of 2004, where the question of visible versus invisible translation was mentioned. Adherents of both schools ultimately came to at least near-agreement, concluding that what may in theory appear a wide gap between them is often bridged in practice. “A good translator will produce a good translation. At the end of an interesting and challenging piece of work, the translator can experience some of the original author’s creativity. It is a great reward in itself” (66).

D. Deletion, Replacement, Retention, Addition:

Cultural norms are easy to identify in translation. By comparing the translation with the original, one can usually tell whether a cultural norm is: a) a source culture norm only; b) a target culture norm only; c) common to both source and target cultures. Deletion in the translation usually suggests that the norm is source culture only. Replacement implies that the norm is target culture only. Addition in translation serves the purpose of avoiding linguistic ambiguity, and sometimes to explain some culturally specific references in the text. In culturally-related societies, e.g. Quebec and Anglophone Canada, the most common feature would be retention. In those that are culturally- unrelated, replacement and deletion would be

the most common practices. Some translations are marked by heavy deletions for the sake of, what Klingberg terms, “purification”, and very few replacements, like the abridgment of *Tom Sawyer* in Arabic. Others are marked with heavy replacements like the translations of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*.

E. Abridgment:

In examining the translated children’s literature into Arabic, one cannot fail to see the norm of abridgment. Abridgments occur not only in translated works, but also in written versions of children’s works adapted from adult books. “In the history of children’s literature,” Klingberg says, “there is a long tradition of shortened editions. Generally, they are abridgments of works originally published for adults.” (73).

If we take translated children’s literature into Arabic as an example, two types of abridgments are found: Minor and Major. Minor abridgments are, according to Klingberg, “a normal part of the translation work” (73), such as a whole chapter is condensed into a few paragraphs or a paragraph is summarized in one sentence. In minor abridgments what is often lost are the details, not the general idea or the structure.

“Major abridgments”, Klingberg says, “could be described as falsification, especially when the source text is a work of a high literary quality.” (73). The danger of major abridgments lies in the fact that they affect the whole structure of the original work. This is why Klingberg recommends that “abridgments of works of literary quality should be avoided [...] . In any case they ought not to be tolerated.” (80). However, some might think that this recommendation is sweeping, because the translator is working under several constraints some of which are imposed on him by the target culture and society. If a society thinks, for

example, that it is not good for its children to be exposed to negative attitude towards school and learning, the translator will have no choice but to skip the parts containing such attitudes. If s/he wants to keep these passages, s/he will have to change the negative attitude into a positive one. Generally speaking, major abridgments occur more often in the translation of works belonging to two unrelated cultures and languages, e.g., English and Arabic.

II. Tom Sawyer:

▪ **Deletion:**

The Arabic translation of *Tom Sawyer* overflows with examples of “purification” through deletion. The passages (sometimes as long as a whole chapter) that are deleted in the Arabic translation have been omitted on these grounds: religion, sense of humor, ethics, disrespect towards family members, negative attitude towards school and learning, flaws in the character (aggressiveness, violence), language (puns on words, informal and slang expressions and phrases).

1) Religion. Here deletions are of two types:

a) Omission of passages dealing with Christianity for the obvious reason that the text is aimed mainly at Muslim children. “Cultural context adaptation”, where by a source language culture specific is replaced by a target language cultural specific, is useless here due to the major differences in both the contents of prayers and in prayer performance between Islam and Christianity. For example,

1) The fact that conducting collective prayers in Islam is a man’s job. To have a Muslim woman, say Aunt Polly, performs a collective prayer is not only unthinkable, but forbidden by religious law.

2) The boys’ funeral and the details of the church service related to it:

“As the service went on, the minister drew such pictures of the delightful ways and the rare promise of the lost children... the minister prayed, and a moving song was sung.” (p. 163)

3) When the minister asked people in the church to thank God for the boys’ safety by singing:

“Suddenly the minister shouted at the top of his voice: ‘Praise my soul, the king of heaven’, Sing! And put your hearts into it!” (p. 165)

b) Omission of passages with religious specifics:

1) Believing that Friday is a bad luck. For Muslims, Friday is a religious day of a particular significance:

“Tom, do you know what day it is?” said Huck suddenly

“Good heavens! I never once thought about it, Huck.”

“..., there are some lucky days, perhaps, but Friday isn’t one of them.” Said Tom. (p. 227)

2) Passages where alcohol or anything related to it is mentioned, for the obvious reason that it is forbidden in Islamic Law:

○ “I know it. Don’t move. He isn’t sharp enough to notice us. Drunk as usual, I expect.” (p. 77)

○ “Mr. Dobbins always got ready for great occasions, such as Prize Day, by having a little too much to drink” (p. 197)

○ “Why, the only spirit there is the alcoholic kind! They pretend they don’t sell drink there” (p. 249)

c) Omission of passages wherein religion, or a religious specific, is being “ridiculed”, as the following paragraph demonstrates:

“Breakfast over, Aunt Polly had family worship: it began with a prayer

built from the ground up of solid courses of Scriptural quotations,

welded together with a thin mortar of originality, and from the summit

of this she delivered a grim chapter of the Mosaic Law, as from Sinai.”(p. 28)

2) Sense of humor:

Humor is culture specific. What may be funny and humorous to one culture may not be so at all to another. Even within the same culture, adult and children humor do not always concur. In *Tom Sawyer*, humor touches upon every aspect of Tom's life. Humor is what makes the work a great classic. Unfortunately, this element has suffered greatly in the Arabic translation. It is very dry and read more like a tale than a lively story. Many humorous passages that were omitted could have been saved on account of their being perfectly translatable into Arabic. Some of the humorous passages were sacrificed because they show a bad behavior or unacceptable attitude:

- When Huck and Tom agreed on a sign to meet without aunt Polly's knowledge:

“Will you make a noise like a cat?”

“Yes, and make the same cat noise back if you get a chance. The last time you kept me outside the house until old Hays began throwing things at me and saying, ‘Get away cat!’ So, I threw a brick through his window; but don't tell.” (p. 57)

- When Huck admired Tom's style of writing!

“Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer swear that they will keep their mouths shut about this and they wish that may drop dead in their tracks if they ever tell”

“Huckleberry was filled with admiration at the way Tom wrote and at the grand manner of his language.” (p. 91)

- When Tom picked up Amy's rose and put it in his coat:

“... and buttoned it inside his coat next to his heart, or next to his stomach possibly, for he wasn't quite sure where the one began and the other ended.” (p. 37)

3) Disrespect for family members. While some cultures may see no harm in speaking in sarcastic terms of family members, others may not allow it at all. In the Arab culture, making fun of such next- of- kin as aunts or uncles (both on father's or mother's side) is not allowed. Older brothers or sisters are held in high respect, at times even feared. Hence the omission in the Arabic version of all the passages that speak humorously of aunt Polly:

- Tom lied to Aunt Polly and said that he painted the fence himself, which was his punishment for fighting with the new boy, and she believed him and let him go to play. (p. 35)

- Lying to aunt Polly when he said he dreamed of her when he was on the island. He made fun of her by telling her what he actually heard in reality as if he dreamed about it. (pp. 168-174)

- Tom's carelessness when aunt Polly was angry at him for throwing earth at Sid. Not only that but he also stole sugar under her nose. (p. 39)

4) Ethics: Large chunks of text have been deleted from various chapters because they deal with:

- a) Tom's aggressiveness and "violent" nature with the boy whom he had met for the first time. Perhaps the translator felt that such flaws of character are too harmful to Arab children and need to be omitted:

"Tom chased the traitor home, and thus found where he lived. He then held a position at the gate for some time, daring the enemy to come outside, but the enemy only made faces at him through the window and declined. At last the enemy's mother appeared, and called Tom

a bad boy, vicious, vulgar child, and ordered him away. So, he went away; but said he “lowed” to “lay” for that boy.” (p. 17)

b) Tom’s tender feelings for the girl he had seen in the garden, “He worshiped this new angel with furtive eye, till he saw that she had divorced him.” (p. 25)

And for Amy Lawrence:

“A certain Amy Lawrence vanished out of his heart and left not even a memory of herself behind. He had thought he had loved her to distraction, he had regarded his passion as adoration [...]” (p. 24)

Tom’s encounter with the new girl is kept in the Arabic version, but it is depicted in dry and innocent terms (no love words are mentioned). However, the translator decides to delete the paragraph dealing with Amy Lawrence, Tom’s first love, because of its heavy dose of love related terms. Such words, and the feeling they express, are not acceptable among children in Arab society.

c) Tom’s obnoxious behavior and his attempt to steal (sugar).

Although Tom was only behaving like any boy whose “spirits were so high” would, because of some good thing that had happened to him (Tom had just met a new girl), the translator decided to omit all of the paragraphs dealing with Tom’s “childish” behavior and restlessness- the stealing of sugar is but a manifestation of such a behavior. (pp. 25-26)

d) Negative attitude towards school and disrespect for teachers.

All passages in which Tom either spoke ill of school and teachers, or tried to think of a plan to skip school have been omitted. Such passages are very humorous and are perfectly

translatable into Arabic, but the translator decided to delete them, perhaps, the omission of such passages deprives Arab children from the joy of sharing a universal childhood experience. Examples are listed below:

- Tom's Admiration of Huck's way of life:

"He didn't have to go to school or to church, or call anyone master, or obey anybody" (p. 53)

- His plan to skip school:

"He wished he was ill." "Then he remembered hearing the doctor speak about a sick boy who had spent two or three weeks in bed and who had nearly lost a finger through blood poisoning" (p. 45)

Maybe this was deleted so as not to put any "bad" ideas into the minds of Arab children. The reality, however, is that there is no child in the world who, at one point of his/her life, has not tried to come up with an idea- even a lie perhaps- to skip school.

- The boys' plan to take revenge on Mr. Dobbins (their teacher):

"The cat was now very close to the teacher's head. Down, down, a little lower, and seized his false hair with her stretched legs" (p.201)

- e) Violence: passages include violent situations that children at a certain age better not to be exposed to:

- The crime scene when Dr. Robinson by Injun Joe:

"... At the same moment Injun Joe saw his chance and drove the knife up to the handle in the young man's breast. He cried out and fell partly on Potter, flooding him with his blood..."

(pp. 81)

f) Taboos and ideas children should not be exposed to:

○ Smoking pipe:

“So, would I, said Joe. “It’s just nothing. I believe I could smoke this pipe all day, I don’t feel sick” (p.149)

“They found that they could now smoke a little without having to go and hunt for a lost knife. They didn’t get sick enough to be seriously uncomfortable” (p. 159)

“At last, when they got out their pipes [at school], and went around smoking them, the very height of glory was reached” (p. 175)

○ Tom’s desire to be a robber and a thief:

➤ “Look here Huck, being rich isn’t going to prevent me from being a robber.”(p. 321)

➤ “If I become a first-class robber, she’ll be proud that she dragged me in out of the rain.” (p. 323)

➤ “And who shall we rob?”

“Oh, almost anybody ...”

“And kill them?”

“No, not always.” (P. 301)

▪ **Replacement:**

○ Religious, and slang expressions were either replaced by equivalents in Arabic or deleted: like, “Good Lord”, “Good heavens”, “Heavens above”, “hang the boy”, “hang it”, “Grand!”.

○ The translator of *Tom sawyer* changed the word “cent” into (قرش) with a footnote in which he says, “we have used here the word (قرش) instead of the word “cent”, which is the

American currency used in the original text to bring the meaning closer to the mind of the Arab reader” (ft. 1, p. 13). This is exactly what Bravo-Villasante warns against, as she says, “the criteria by which the originals should be adapted to the practices of the country in question so that they can be understood better, result in the distortion of the text” (48).

III. Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

In the translation of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* into Arabic by (a committee of specialists), five chapters have been deleted, and only seven chapters (out of twelve) have been translated. These are: *Down The Rabbit- Hole*, *The Pool Of The Tears*, *Advice From A Caterpillar*, *Pig And Pepper*, *The Mock Turtle’s Story*, *Who Stole The Tarts? a Caucus-Race and a long Tale*. Two more, however, have been referred to in the translation by Abdullah Alkabeer: *A Mad Tea Party*, and *The Queen’s Croquet-Ground*. In the translation published by Daar Almajany *Pig and Pepper*, *The Mock Turtle’s Story*, *a Caucus-Race and a long tale* were also deleted.

▪ **Deletion:**

I. Deletion for cultural purposes in the translations of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*

is much less than it is in the translation of *Tom Sawyer*. Examples of such deletions:

1. Referring to tea-time in *Down the Rabbit Hole*, is deleted from the three Arabic translations, probably because it is an English tradition:

“I hope they’ll remember her a saucer of milk at tea time” (p. 14).

2. “Wine” in *A Mad Tea Party* was deleted because it is prohibited in Islam:

“Have some wine, the March Hare said,

I don't see any wine, she remarked" (p. 80)

3. Historical references in *A Caucus-Race and a long Tale*: William the Conqueror, Edwin and Morcar, and Marcia and Northumbria are alien to the Arab child. Keeping this historical information would require several footnotes and explanations, which might turn the young readers off. (p.32)

4. "Christmas" in *The Pool of Tears* was deleted from the translation by Abdullah Alkabeer, and the translation published by Daar Almajani. It was replaced, though, in the translation by the Committee of Specialists. (p. 22)

5. Other deletions will be mentioned in the parts that deal with replacement and addition.

II. Deletions on linguistic grounds and the children's assumed inability to understand the text are exceeding those in *Tom Sawyer*:

1. There is no existence of any kind of rimes and songs found in various chapters in the original.

2. Chapter three, "*A Caucus-Race and A Long Tale*", displays several challenges both for the translator and for the young reader.

- The challenge comes from the absurdity of the rules governing the Caucus-race, a race which even Alice did not recognize. The translator assumes it is difficult for children to understand.

- The dummy "it", which occurs in the mouse's speech several times and which the Lory could not understand what it means, has no Arabic equivalent that can render the same tone and humor as found in the original.

- Dodo's closing sentence "In that case, I move that the meeting be adjourned, for the immediate adoption of more energetic remedies", and the Eaglet's reply, "Speak English!" (p.33).

While Dodo's sentence is perfectly translatable into Arabic, (في هذه الحالة, ألتمس تأجيل الاجتماع كي نتمكن من اتخاذ إجراءات فعالة) the part that presents the greatest difficulty is "Speak English!" This phrase reflects the Eaglet's reaction to a type of language so formal that it is not recognizable as English. "Speak Arabic" will not do, because it does not connote the same thing as its English equivalent. Arabic and English do not possess the same formality levels: formal, informal, colloquial and slang.

- The pun "tale" and "tail" in: "It is a long tale, certainly, said Alice looking down with wonder at the mouse tail" (p. 34). Puns and wordplay "demand and resist translation" (Klingberg 69). One can play on words much more easily in some languages than in others. Similarly, translation of wordplay is possible between certain pairs of languages but not between others. The omission of puns from the Arabic translation is due mainly to the fact that it is very difficult to find equivalent puns in Arabic. This particular pun was successfully translated by Abdullah Alkabeer where he changed the pun into ambiguity:

"Mine is a long and a sad tale! Said the mouse,

It is a long tail, certainly. Said Alice looking down at the mouse's tail."

"إن تاريخي طويل.. ومحزن أيضاً"

فنظرت أليس إلى ذيل الفأر، وقالت: "إنه طويل حقاً. لكن لماذا تقول أنه محزن؟" (ص. 15)

It is when elements such as these meet in one chapter or section of the work being translated that the decision to make "major abridgment" is often made.

▪ **Addition:**

As it was said before, the translator sometimes leans toward the target text (the acceptability norm) that s/he becomes so involved to the point that s/he takes the role of the narrator. With regard to content, these translators take great liberties in adding information as an explanation of cultural references or linguistic ambiguity; or to stress character's quality or drawback or emphasize a point. Sometimes the purpose is to add some ethical or educational value believed to be important for children of the target culture. The following are examples from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* which demonstrate the translator's involvement in the target text, and the additional comments made by him that would sometimes give a different meaning from the original:

- Additions to arouse the young reader's interest and keep it up (translated by Abdullah Alkabeer):

Original text I:

“So, she was considering in her own mind (as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a white rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her” (p. 13).

كان ذلك النهار شديد الحرارة، مما جعل أليس تشعر بالكسل، ويأخذها نعاس شديد. لذا كانت تجهد فكرها وتتساءل: ترى هل أن السعادة التي ستشعر بها إذا ما قامت وأخذت تلتقط الأزهار وتجمعها في عقود، توازي مشقة النهوض لجمع تلك

الأزهار؟ إنها لا تظن ذلك. (ص. 9)

Original Text II:

“There was nothing so very remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so very much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself, “Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!” (p. 14). (Translated by a committee of specialists)

Arabic Text II:

وبينما هي غارقة في تفكيرها إذ بأرنب أبيض له عينان زرقاوان يمر مسرعا بجانبها. آه ياله من أرنب جميل! لم يكن مرور الأرنب بحد ذاته شيئا جديدا بالنسبة إلى أليس، فكثيرا ما رآته يقفز على العشب في البستان. ولكنها عندما سمعته يحدث نفسه قائلا: << آه! آه! لقد تأخرت كثيرا >> بدأت تتابعه بنظراتها وهي ترى في ذلك شيئا غير عادي. (ص. 10)

When the translator says: “Oh! What a beautiful rabbit”, he is in fact echoing the children’s feelings regarding this animal; and when he says that when Alice saw the rabbit talking to itself, she thought the matter very strange, he is indirectly addressing the young readers, as if to say, “well! Don’t you think it is strange that a rabbit could talk to itself?”

Original text III:

“Her eyes immediately met those of a large blue caterpillar” (p. 52)

(by Daar Almajany) "سألها مخلوق عجيب كان يجلس على قبة الفطر. أتعرفون من يكون هذا المخلوق؟ دودة فراش." (ص. 7)

○ Unnecessary Addition (by Abdullah Alkabeer) of some educational values that are not in the original:

"أليس بنت ذكية مطيعة مجتهدة، تذهب إلى المدرسة وتتنبه إلى كل ما تقوله مدرستها. وبعد أن تعود إلى البيت وتتناول غداءها، تذاكر دروسها وتكتب واجباتها، وتساعد أمها في أعمال البيت الخفيفة..." (ص. 3,4)

○ Addition in Abdullah Alkabeer's translation to explain what is the dodo. It is an unfamiliar bird to Arab children. It is an extinct bird which was first found in an island in the Indian Ocean and ceased to exist since the second half of the seventeenth century. This bird did not live in the Middle East; thus, we can understand why we do not find much about it in Arabic children's literature.

"وهناك طائر أكبر من الديك الرومي اسمه الدودو" (ص. 14)

▪ **Replacement and Retention:**

One can easily notice that when it comes to cultural-specific references in the translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, replacement will take the lead. Following are some examples:

○ Changing the "Daisy" into "الأزهار" by "the committee of specialists", and into "الفل" by Abdullah Alkabeer. The Daisy is a European flower that doesn't grow in the Middle East. That is why it was substituted by something familiar to Arab Children. It was deleted from the translation published by Daar Almajany.

○ Replacing the "Duchess" with "الأميرة", because the Duchess is a social rank known to the western culture and was never existed as a social rank in the Arabic culture. It is, as Longman Dictionary defines it, a woman with the highest social rank below a princess, or the wife of a Duke. Substituting it with a more common rank like princess serves the fluency of the text. However, it was deleted from the translation published by Daar Almajany.

○ The "Lory" was translated as "بيغاء". The "Lory" is a kind of parrot's lives in Australia. Although it would have not been recognized by Arab children if it was retained as "اللوري", it would have perhaps added new information to the Arab child. The same can be

said about replacing the word “flamingos” with “بجعات”, and translating “March Hare” into "فأر".

○ The word “Christmas” (p. 21) has been rendered as عيد الميلاد (p. 28) which can mean “birthday” instead of (عيد ميلاد المسيح). substituting “Christmas” for “birthday” will slip by the Arab Muslim reader. They may not be in the know of how Christians celebrate this religious day, the opportunity to learn that Christians exchange presents during Christmas.

Nonetheless, it is not without good reason that the choice of “birthday” has been made. The young readership in the Arab world consists of Muslim and Christian Arab children.

Rendering “Christmas” as عيد ميلاد المسيح (the birthday of Jesus Christ) would alienate Muslim children while the choice for neutral reference, عيد الميلاد “birthday” can only mean Christmas to a Christian Arab.

○ There is no consistency when it comes to measures. In the translation by the “committee of specialists”, words like “inch” (إنش) were retained, where they could have used the Arabic terms (بوصة) or (اصبع)- or at least give one of them between parentheses immediately after “inch”. The translators render the word “gallon” (in the phrase “shedding gallons and gallons of tears” literally: (لقد ذرفت جالونات وجالونات من الدموع)). Perhaps, they want to teach the young Arab reader that in Britain they use “inch” and “gallon” as measure words; or perhaps they believe that the child should take the trouble to do a little bit of research and look them up in a dictionary or ask an adult. In doing so, s/he will be learning something about the British culture and acquiring some understanding into their culture. Moreover, the fact that the translators decided to keep “inch” and “gallons” in the Arabic text may not be a bad decision after all; for “changing measures often result in poor translation” (Klingberg

54). A US gallon is only 3.785 liters. The Oxford English-Arabic Dictionary of Current Usage mentions the British gallon only and gives a different reading: 4.55 liters. On the other hand, we find these words substituted for their Arabic equivalents in the translation by Abdullah Alkabeer. “Fifteen inches” and “ten inches” were rendered as “نصف متر” and “ربع متر” respectively. “Nine feet” and “four inches deep” were translated as “ثلاث أمتار” and “شبر” respectively. This might be easier for children to understand, but it will deny them the opportunity to learn more about the British culture. In the translation published by Daar Almajany, there is no mention of any measure words.

IV. “Hypercultural Sensitivity”:

One further point worth discussing is what can be called (hypercultural sensitivity). It is the exertion of a strong effort on the part of the translator to bring the text closer to the young reader that the reader’s intelligence is insulted. An example of such hypercultural sensitivity is provided by Smith Datus as he says that “A picture showing an American family buying a car was changed in Iran to a rug-buying expedition to the bazaar.” (107) Making it sound as if “buying a car” is a culturally specific of Americans and Westerners only, and “buying a rug” of the Iranian culture only. A second example is provided by Becker’s comments on three fairy-tale picture books. He listed picture elements included in these books. The pictures were: European forest landscape, medieval castle in Gothic style, king with crown and three princes, wicked witch, medieval soldier with chain armor, a swan with a golden crown, elves with trumpets, mice dressed up like human beings, etc. (33,34).

What Becker meant by his comment is that all these European cultural specifics should be translated to their Arabic equivalents, if these exist. He implies that Arab children cannot “visualize” a European forest landscape. What about the dense Cedar forests of Lebanon? As for castles, Kings, Princes, crowns, soldiers with armor, not only is Arabic literature full of stories about them, it is also a rich descriptive source of the royal life from Persia, Bagdad and Arab Spain. What about elves and witches? *One Thousand and One Nights* is filled with such characters. Besides, how many European children have seen an elf or a witch in real life to be able to visualize it mentally? As for mice dressed up as human beings, European children have not seen any except in cartoons. Not to mention the fact that a large number of Arab children grow up bilingual (Arabic and French in North Africa, and

Arabic and English in the Middle East). These children are able to read European and American books and stories in the original language. This, in turn, implies that they are in a position to have the potential of knowing a great deal about Western cultures.

However, this does not mean that every change made in the translation of cultural specifics is considered “hypercultural sensitivity”. For example, there are some acceptable changes of cultural specifics when translating English texts into Arabic.

1. The Animal Kingdom:

Some examples can be taken from the animal kingdom. Cultures do not always see the same animal in the same light:

a. The dog

The dog is part and parcel of the Western household. In the Arab culture, the dog’s place is outside the house. The intimate relationship between man and dog in Western cultures will suffer in the translation into Arabic on account of cleanliness. In Islamic culture, the dog is najis نجس (ritually impure). The relationship between man and dog in the Arab culture is a functional one: providing security to the master. Anything beyond that could be unacceptable.

b. The pig

The other example is the pig. In Western culture the pig is a pet. Pork is used in delicious dishes. In western children’s literature- known under different names as Mother Pig, Porky, Miss Piggy- is an established children’s character. This is not the case in the Arab culture wherein the image of the animal is one of filth and trash, hence, the insult “Khinzir!” (خنزير) (pig!). As for food, pork is forbidden to Muslims by their religion. It has almost

vanished from the farms of Arab countries. It is hard to imagine it being raised as livestock in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the Gulf States. Because of this negative image the pig has acquired in the Arab culture, we can understand why such stories as *The Three Little Pigs* would have to be changed into other animals with which Arab children and parents would feel more comfortable both culturally and religiously like the lamb.

2. Religious Symbols

Religious symbols and places of worship. The question of whether or not to keep the Cross, the picture of Jesus Christ, churches, etc. in the translation into Arabic depends largely on the translator and the audience the translator has in mind. If the translator is of Muslim faith, the tendency is to omit the passages which contain heavy doses of the Christian religion altogether, as in the translation of *Tom Sawyer*. On the other hand, if the translator is Christian Arab, these religious specifics are preserved in the translation, since he or she is not sensitive about such things the way a Muslim translator might be. Such translations will be limited to countries of Christian populations like Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Sudan.

Conclusion:

The translation of children's literature, in fact even writing for children, is unfortunately often seen as a simple exercise. It is seen as an activity which anyone, with a fairly good knowledge of the source and the target languages, and an "elegant" style, can take up. There is a little awareness on the part of many translators, and perhaps some writers of children's literature, that children's literature constitutes a system within the polysystem. The issue of low status of children's literature and translated children's literature in the literary system is the main reason behind the inconsistency among scholars on how to define the concept and what to call it.

Some translators claim the right to treat texts aimed at children with a great liberty. They permit themselves to manipulate the text in various ways due to: (1) The fact that children are falsely and negatively viewed by some scholars as a minority in the world of literature. (2) Believing that their literature is self-explanatory, hence, the absence of literary criticism of translated children's literature. (3) The marginal situation of texts for children. The different kinds of censorship that children's literature is subject to are often justified in many ways: (1) on pedagogical grounds. (2) Children's assumed incapability to understand due to their lack of both experience and ideal background knowledge which will allow them to identify the text's social and cultural norms. (3) The desire to make the target text as appealing, interesting, and enjoyable as the source text.

One need not be an expert on translated children's literature to notice the widespread phenomenon of adopting a cultural-biased approach to translation. The approach makes culture familiar to readers by means of changing the source language culture into the

target language culture in translation. This happens either by deleting a set of source language values, or by adding other values considered appropriate for the target language readers. The phenomenon, however, has many opponents which led to the debate discussed in the previous pages between the advocates of foreignization and those of domestication.

The literature written on this subject is quite big. This research, however, neither agrees nor disagrees with former studies or research works done on the subject. It takes a path between the two. It argues that there is no generalized translational procedure when it comes to cultural-specific texts. The translator may choose to use a combination of strategies in his translation depending on the situation of every individual text. On the one hand, cultural specifics cannot all be preserved in the translation for some of them may collide head on with the religious, social, or political values of the target language. They might also be too difficult for the child reader to comprehend which would put the young reader off. As for the Arab world, the situation becomes even more complex and alarming. Parents, educators and religious authorities believe that their children sliding away from their culture to embrace foreign values and ways of life, and they feel helpless in front of the western cultural avalanche. This may reflect feelings of worry and nervousness on the part of some Arab thinkers and men of letters regarding the infiltration of the western values and “poisonous” ideas through translation. All this may lead to domestication as the only way possible.

On the other hand, the translator should not exaggerate and exert a strong effort to bring the text closer to the young reader. Not to the extent of disrespecting the source language culture, or insulting the young reader’s intelligence by underestimating the child’s competence and ability to understand. Contemporary children are more tolerant supported by

many factors. Among these factors is the early foreign language learning in schools. Another factor is the general practice of showing TV programmes and films in the original language with subtitles. This practice contributes to an easier and early acceptance and understanding of foreign elements in literature. Besides, domestication sometimes defeats the purpose of promoting understanding among cultures. If the goal of translation is to promote such understanding, cultural elements, although alien to the reader of the target language, ought to not to be changed or tampered with during the act of translation. One needs to know the other culture in order to understand it.

One last point to be mentioned, after studying the examples of cultural adaptation in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Tom Sawyer*, one can notice that some of these translations were successful others were not. We can also notice that in culturally-unrelated societies, like Arabic and English, deletion and replacement are more likely to be used than addition and retention. Incidents of deletion outnumbered those of replacement, especially in a very cultural-specific work like *Tom Sawyer*. This may be because Arabic and English cultures are extremely different which makes replacement more difficult than deletion, and sometimes not successful. Addition by explanation on the other hand might be not practical. One can also suggest that in the case of translated children's literature of a dreamy or imaginative nature (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*); culturally specific references are not intense to the extent that they would require heavy deletions. This is simply because imagination is a common feature among children around the globe. Whereas works with real people characters (*Tom Sawyer*), are marked with many deletions because they are usually loaded with religious, social, and cultural specifics.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Research:

This research recommends a strategy for the translation of children's literature into Arabic. This strategy might reduce the randomness which may be resulted from the translator's individual taste. It consists of six points:

- (1) The necessity to supply introductions to translated books that will give the young readers a general idea about the author, his/her country and culture.
- (2) The necessity to promote and encourage literary criticism of children's books as the only means of improving the quality of translated books in terms of language and style.
- (3) The necessity to create incentives for the translators of children's literature and to reward them deservedly.
- (4) The necessity to organize training programs and courses for the translators of children's literature into Arabic.
- (5) Translation of children's literature into Arabic- for children aged ten, twelve and above- should at this point be theme- oriented. That is, to encourage the translation of novels and stories in such field that either non-existent, or which Arab children are not familiar with like environment, AIDS, space, civil wars.
- (6) The necessity to sit up a translated children's literature board. Its function is to make recommendations as to what to what themes and genres translators should turn their attention to. It also recommends the newest books in the market for translation.

Moreover, the board will set up regulations to set up quality standards in terms of both content and product.

This research also suggests to widen the scope of research to treat many substantial issues in the field of translated children's literature into Arabic. Following are examples of such topics:

- (1) The history of translated children's literature in the Arab world from pre-Islamic era to the present day.
- (2) The issue of linking children's literature to the educational system.
- (3) Arabic children's literature and ideology.
- (4) The phenomenon of anonymous translations (translated books into Arabic are usually published without the name of the translator).
- (5) The influence of Americanization and cultural imperialism on translated children's literature into Arabic.
- (6) The linguistic norms in translating children's literature into Arabic, and the controversy of Alfusha (classical Arabic) vs. Alaamyia (colloquial Arabic). As well as the influence of media and press on Arab children's language, and how it affects translated children's literature.

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قائمة قصص الأطفال المترجمة التي اعتمدها هذا البحث:

أليس في بلاد العجائب: ترجمة عبدالله الكبير, الطبعة السادسة عشرة, سلسلة المكتبة الخضراء, القاهرة: دار المعارف, بدون تاريخ.

أليس في بلاد العجائب: ترجمة وإعداد لجنة من المختصين. سلسلة "قصص للناشئة", بيروت: مكتبة المعارف, بدون تاريخ.

أليس في بلاد العجائب: مجموعة حكايات الأحلام, بيروت: منشورات دار المجاني, بدون تاريخ.

توم سوير: لمارك توين, ترجمة مراد حلمي, سلسلة "أولادنا", الطبعة الثانية, القاهرة: دار المعارف, بدون تاريخ.

توم سوير: لمارك توين, إشراف ومتابعة سمير عزة نصار, الطبعة الثانية, سلسلة روائع القصص العالمية, عمان: الأهلية للنشر والتوزيع, 2008